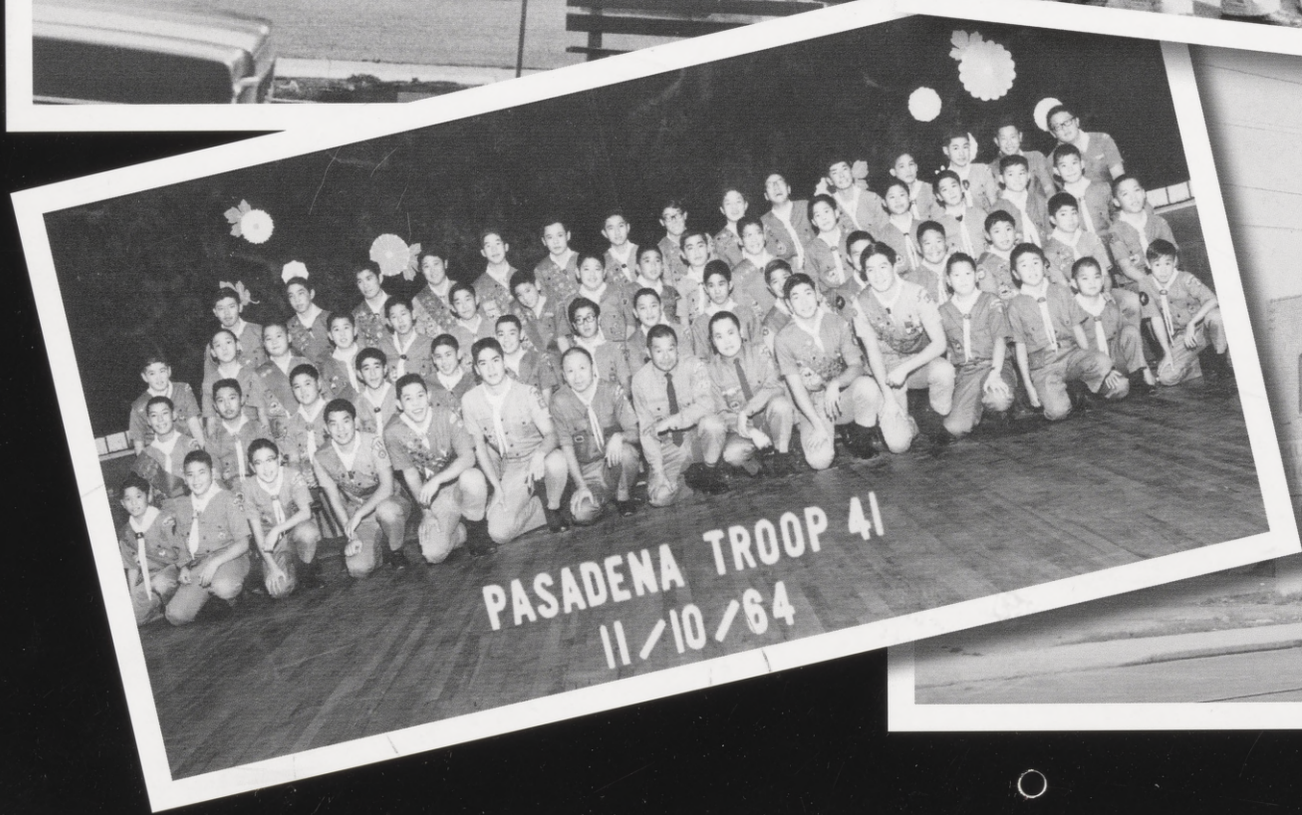
Kansha Pasadena 2021



KANSHA PASADENA

Kansha Pasadena strives to honor, preserve and share the unique history and culture of Japanese Americans in the Greater Pasadena area by researching and documenting family histories, personal stories, cultural sites, and historic buildings.

Dear Friends,

Last June, I attended the quarterly PCC President's Asian Advisory Council meeting. The council invited black campus leaders and Dr. Pam Powell, a national educational leader, to our meeting to discuss the current situation with regard to social justice and the Black Lives Matter movement. We are living in a pivotal moment in our society's history and after 400+ years, change will begin.

One of the items mentioned by Dr. Powell was the importance of preserving our cultural identities AND actively sharing our stories and culture with one another to promote understanding.

Since my father's and Itsy Ota's passing earlier this year, I have given much thought about what I can do to share our culture and stories with the entire community, including our own Nikkei community. And as we have lost many of our seniors over the last few years and many have passed away during the COVID-19 pandemic, I began thinking of ways to express gratitude for the great efforts and sacrifice they gave for our community. I also recall many mornings when the Pasadena Nikkei Seniors handicraft class would meet and I would stop by from my office to hear many of their stories and experiences from the past. I realized that unless I knew about their stories, I would not be grateful for all they had done for me.

With this in mind, I thought it would be wonderful if we could have an ongoing project where we could collect these stories and share them with our younger generation as well as with the greater community. Much like many other historical societies and organizations, our stories and history can be captured and preserved through photographs, essays, poetry, art, documentary films, books, diverse gatherings, recognition, etc.

It is truly heartwarming that since our first online Zoom meeting in July 2020, with 13 participants, Kansha Pasadena has grown to over 35 friends who have joined and have expressed their interest and support for our efforts. For me, in many ways, our monthly meetings have helped to keep me connected with many friends who I had not seen in many years and has provided comfort during this COVID-19 pandemic. For this I am truly grateful and I hope and expect that Kansha Pasadena will continue for generations to come. Every day is a day in our community's history.

This calendar is our way of sharing some of the discoveries we have made and also a way of raising funds to continue the project.

We welcome interested participants, or if you have any questions, comments, or information to share, please feel free to contact us at kanshapasadena@gmail.com or I can be reached at Affinity Associates, (626) 396-9927.

With gratitude,

Bryan Takeda

We would like to thank all of the participants and contributors of Kansha Pasadena including:

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Bryan Takeda
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Cindy Yuge
Craig Uchida
Debbie Kubota
Deena Yanari Ota
Diane Hisayasu
Dona Mitoma
Dorothy Potter
Elaine Tajima
Ellen Shimamoto
Jeannie Toshima
Jeffery Ogata
Jeri Takeda
JoAnne Soohoo
Judy Kam
Judy Nagata Miyashiro
Kelly Hokyo
Ken Kikkawa
Leslie Ito
Lynne Tsuboi
Mark Matsui
Mary Matsumoto
Marvin Inouye
Misa Kawano
Mits Hino
Mitsie Yanari
Nan Senzaki
Nancy Ota
Pam Praeger
Rachel Yamaguchi
Robert Kikkawa
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Sandy Halili
Sharon Lee
Susie Ling
Takako "Tee" Murashige
Tim Yuge
Veronica Ota
Virginia Ishida
Wade Utsunomiya
Wendy Fujihara Anderson

Resources

Pasadena Digital History Collaboration, www.pasadenadigitalhistory.com
- January (Oda Laundry photo, Meiji Laundry information)
- July (Pasadena Japanese Community Center information)
- December (Rose Shoda Nishio information)

Rafu Shimpo
May 4, 2000
- February (Ota's Market, Johnny's Sport Shop information)
- April (Pasonas information)

July 6, 1999
- September (Boy Scout Troop 41 information)

The Japanese Directory of Pasadena 1956
- February (Futaba Foods, Lincoln Avenue businesses)

Crown City Crier, December 5, 1948
- March (Ayes information)
- May (Football information)

PJCI website: www.pjci.org
- July (PJCI information)

PJCI 50th Anniversary Calendar 2011-12
- July (PJCI information)

Boy Scouts Troop 41 Reunion 1931-1999 booklet
- September (Troop 41 Scoutmaster information)

Pasadena Bruins website, www.pasadenabruins.org
- October (PJAA and Pasadena Bruins information)

Pasadena Asian Concern introduction letter 1971
- November (PAC information)

Yellow Tongue Newsletter, Vol. 1, Number 3, April 1971
- November (Pioneer Project outing)

Pasadena City College Eighty-Fifth Annual Commencement program, June 18, 2010
- December (PCC Nisei College Diploma Project information)

Densho Encyclopedia
- December (Esther Takei Nishio information)

Calendar designed by Lauren Takeda

creatively
www.creativelystudios.com

Early Pasadena Laundry Businesses

The Oda Laundry drew attention with its zebra-drawn carriage.

Ayako and Suezo Fukutaki with their baby, in front of a Meiji Hand Laundry truck.

The Meiji Laundry, located at 244 W. Colorado, began with five partners: Suezo Fukutaki, Shichitaro Takayama, and possibly Yamaoka, Ozawa, and Suzuki. The laundry served an exclusive clientele, mostly in the Orange Grove Boulevard vicinity, along with hotels and the Las Encinas Hospital.

Also, S. Inouye had a laundry at 891 E. Colorado. Chosaburo and K. Sameshima had a New England Hand Laundry established in 1910 at 1170 S. Fair Oaks (later moved to 217 S. Fair Oaks).

January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18 Martin Luther King Day	19	20	21	22	23
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DECEMBER 2020

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FEBRUARY 2021

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Post-World War II Lincoln Avenue Businesses

Ota's Market *(upper left)*, 1380 Lincoln Avenue, Frank and Toyomi Ota operated the business in this location from 1954 to 1967. In addition to selling Japanese and American grocery items, stone lanterns (toro) were made behind the shop and sold at the store. The market moved to another location on Lincoln Avenue in Altadena from 1967 to 1979, where they also made and sold hamburgers, and Ota's osushi and obento were distributed to the Boys' Market for sale.

Futaba Food Center *(upper right)*, 1507 Lincoln Avenue, owners Akira and Yasuko Nagata and Kiyoshi and Kayo Nagatani, in business 1963 through early 1980's, sold Japanese and American groceries.

Johnny's Sport Shop *(lower right),* 1402 Lincoln Avenue, opened in 1958, and is still being operated in the same location by the same Ota family, being one of the longest-running family-owned Japanese-American businesses in Pasadena. Johnny's fishing tackle business started in 1954, selling from the garage behind Otas Market where he also worked as a butcher.

Johnny's Sport Shop *(middle right)*, March 1984, owners Itsy and Johnny Ota, son Bob who now runs the shop, daughter Amy who assisted with bookkeeping; with workers Mark Komoda and Tim Taylor behind them. Amy also had a gift shop behind the store called "Tezaiku," selling ceramics made by Asian Americans.

Original Johnny's Sport Shop sign *(lower left)* in the parking lot in front of the shop, was taken down after being hit multiple times by cars backing into it, and because it partially hung over the sidewalk.

Other Lincoln Avenue businesses included Lincoln Avenue Nursery, T & T Service Station and Garage, Warrington Garage, Bob's Service Station, M & V Automotive, Muir Barber, KGS Electronics, Mat's Pharmacy, Jimmy's Lawn Mower Shop, Nishio Realty, Kawai Garage, and the Kuriyama Auto Agency.

February

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JANUARY 2021

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MARCH 2021

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Aris Ayes Social Group

After settling in Pasadena from the internment camps, many social groups were formed by the Nisei. One of the men's groups was the Ayes, later called the Aris Ayes, which may have started in 1947 to play in the Nisei Athletic Union (NAU) organized by Akira Komai, the editor and owner of the Rafu Shimpo. Members organized social gatherings such as this bus trip to Mt. Waterman in 1951, held dances with the Kaperettes social group, and formed several sports teams.
In August 1967, the club funds were distributed among the members and the club was disbanded.

Other men's groups were the Coterians and the Stags.

March

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FEBRUARY 2021

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APRIL 2021

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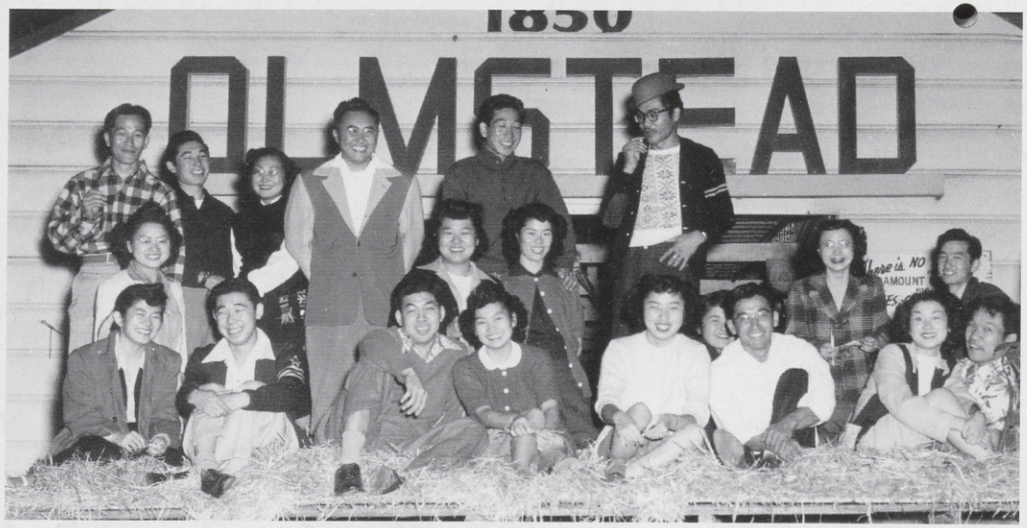

Nisei Women's Social Groups

Pasonas *(bottom left)*, 1948 - Began in 1945 with 15 Nisei women attending Pasadena Junior College (now Pasadena City College), the club grew to 30 with some non-PJC members. The Pasonas name was conceived by Esther Takei (Nishio), from 'Pasadena Onnas' (Pasadena women). Activities included skating and beach parties, talent shows, gala Christmas Eve ball, and raising funds for the Pasadena Japanese Community Center. A "blow the treasury" farewell dinner was held in January 1980.

Pasonas Hayride *(top left)*, Griffith Park, October 1948

Mesdames *(top right)* - Photo is from an officer's installation dinner. The purpose of the group was community service, but also provided social opportunities, inviting women who were new to Pasadena. They were active in community and local church events, holding bake sales, rummage sales, and other activities, donating proceeds to a Pasadena orphanage and other charities.

Kaperettes *(bottom right)* - Photo is from an installation party, May 1950. Mary and Hank Takemura and Mitsie Koyama (Yanari) and Ralph Yanari (bottom rows, far right) were advisors for the group.

April

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MARCH 2021

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MAY 2021

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Nisei Sports Teams

Aris Ayes Bowling Tournament 1952 *(top left)*, Pasadena Deena's Basketball Team 1949 *(top right)*, Baseball Team, ca. 1950 *(middle left)*, Volleyball League at PCC, early 1950s *(bottom right)*, Cliff's Insurance Bowling League 1959 *(bottom left)*

Football teams were also formed. Bowling leagues began as early as 1951.

May

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23 30	24 31 Memorial Day	25	26	27	28	29

APRIL 2021

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JUNE 2021

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Fishing Clubs

The Backlashers fishing club *(above)* began in 1948 with charter members including Tom Arita, Sei Dyo, Bob Fujimoto, Sam Ishida, George Kambara, George Nagai, Johnny Okamura, Triekie Tomoyasu. They planned saltwater and freshwater fishing trips and had annual Memorial Day Crowley Lake/Hawthorne casino trips in the mid-1990s.

The Creelbusters freshwater fishing club began in 1948 with charter members Katch Hayakawa, Tosh Hayakawa, Frank Hirakawa, George Murashige, Shig Nishio, Harry Oka, Heek Okamuro, Ed Okuno, Shig Okuno, Bud Tsuboi, Ted Tsuboi, Harry Yamashina, Dr. Earl Yusa, Roy Wada. Annual trout derbies were held.

June

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MAY 2021

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JULY 2021

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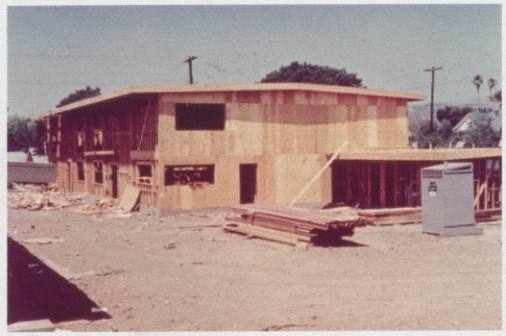

PJCI Groundbreaking

Building of the Pasadena Japanese Cultural Institute (PJCI) at 595 Lincoln Avenue was completed in 1962, includes an auditorium, classrooms, and a separate business office building. This facility was formerly the Pasadena Japanese Community Center at 64 W. Del Mar Street. The PJCI has provided meeting space for a Japanese language school, various martial arts, the Pasadena Nikkei Seniors, and other Japanese cultural activities.

July

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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4 Independence Day	5	6	7	8	9	10
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JUNE 2021

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AUGUST 2021

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Pasadena Japanese Language School

Students and teachers of the Pasadena Japanese Language School at the Pasadena Japanese Cultural Institute in 1967.

August

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JULY 2021

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SEPTEMBER 2021

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BOY SCOUTS

TROOP 41 REUNION

1931 - 1999

41

March 13, 1999

Boy Scout Troop 41

Boy Scout Troop 41, November 1964. Scoutmaster was Henry Hayashi, Assistant Scoutmasters were Harry Higashi, K. Inouye, Fred Hiraoka, Ken Ogawa.
Troop 41 began on March 14, 1931, sponsored by Reverend Kengo Tajima and the Pasadena Japanese Union Church.
The first Japanese American Scoutmaster was Jiro Morita in 1937-38. Mas Sugano was the first Eagle Scout.
With the outbreak of World War II, the troop's charter lapsed from 1943 until it was reactivated in 1951 with Scoutmaster Harry Osaki under the sponsorship of the Pasadena Japanese Community Center which became the Pasadena Japanese Cultural Institute.
The troop ended in 1991 with 112 Eagle Scouts, the highest number in the district of the San Gabriel Valley Council.

Cover of the booklet displaying the troop emblem, from a reunion dinner attended by 200 former members, organized by a Reunion Committee chaired by Ron Dyo.

September

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
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AUGUST 2021

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OCTOBER 2021

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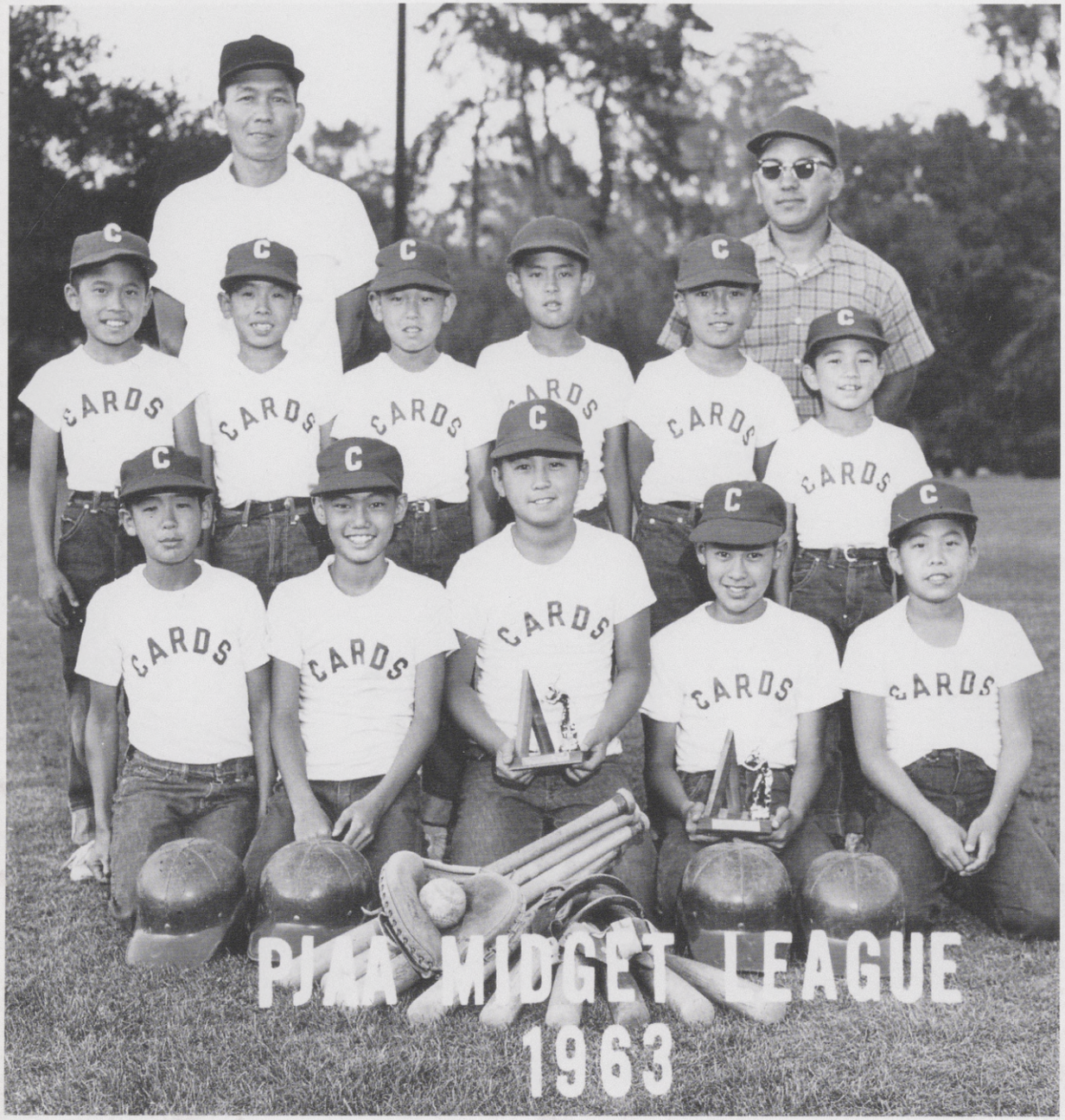

PJAA and Pasadena Bruins

In the 1950's and 1960's, Pasadena had a Japanese-American baseball league called the Pasadena Japanese Athletic Association (PJAA).
In 1972, Ken and June Hayashi, Robert and Alice Kikkawa, Kaz and Hatsumi Kitani, and Tak and Shinobu Kiriyama founded the Pasadena Bruins.
Initially, the Bruins participated in baseball, then expanded into CYC (Community Youth Council) basketball for the boys.
Edward Fukutaki, June Hayashi, and Robert Kikkawa organized girls' teams into the Japanese American Optimist (JAO) league.

October

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SEPTEMBER 2021

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NOVEMBER 2021

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asian creation
... A CREATIVE EXPERIENCE IN CLAY, RESIN DIPPING, & CANDLE MAKING FOR ALL AGES...
Saturday, June 5
10 A.M. - 3 P.M.
JAPANESE CULTURAL CENTER
946 Lincoln Ave. PASADENA
Bring BBQ Lunch - FREE PUNCH
75¢ DONATION

Pasadena Asian Concern (PAC)

Pasadena Asian Concern (PAC) was formed in 1971 by a group of high school and college-aged students who felt a need to unify and address concerns of Asians in the community. The purpose was to provide a communication outlet, deal with youth and community problems, serve the Asian community, promote political and cultural awareness, and provide a social outlet for Asian youth.

PAC initiated the Pioneer Project that served the Issei (first generation) members of the community. Sixty Issei enjoyed a hanami bus trip to Lancaster, planned by PAC members with the assistance of Issei leader Jiro Morita *(lower right)*. This was the beginning of the Pasadena Pioneer Project, now the Pasadena Nikkei Seniors.

November

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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7	8	9	10	11 Veterans Day	12	13
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OCTOBER 2021

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DECEMBER 2021

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PCC Nisei College Diploma Project

Assembly Bill 37, introduced by Assemblyman Warren Furutani, allows institutions of higher learning to grant honorary degrees to Japanese Americans whose education was interrupted by Executive Order 9066 during World War II.

As a result, Pasadena City College granted honorary degrees to thirty Nisei as part of the graduation ceremony held on June 18, 2010.

California Nisei College Diploma Project recipients, along with: top row center, Assemblyman Warren Furutani and PCC Superintendent/President Dr. Lisa Sugimoto; and Associate Professors Susie Ling (top row, far left) and Dorothy Fukutaki Potter (top row, far right) who served on the campus committee for the project.

California Nisei College Diploma Project recipients: Rose Shoda Nishio, long-time pre-war resident of Pasadena; and Esther Takei Nishio

Esther Takei (Nishio) being welcomed in September 1944 to attend Pasadena Junior College (now Pasadena City College) as the first Japanese American "test case" to come to Pasadena from the internment camps. The students were supportive of her attendance, but her arrival also led to protests and a "Ban the Japs Committee" was formed. The furor gradually died down, and her settlement in Pasadena helped to pave the way for the mass return of Japanese Americans to the West Coast. After her parents arrived in Pasadena, she left the school to begin at a secretarial school and began working in clerical positions to help her parents who were rebuilding their lives in Pasadena.

December

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NOVEMBER 2021

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JANUARY 2022

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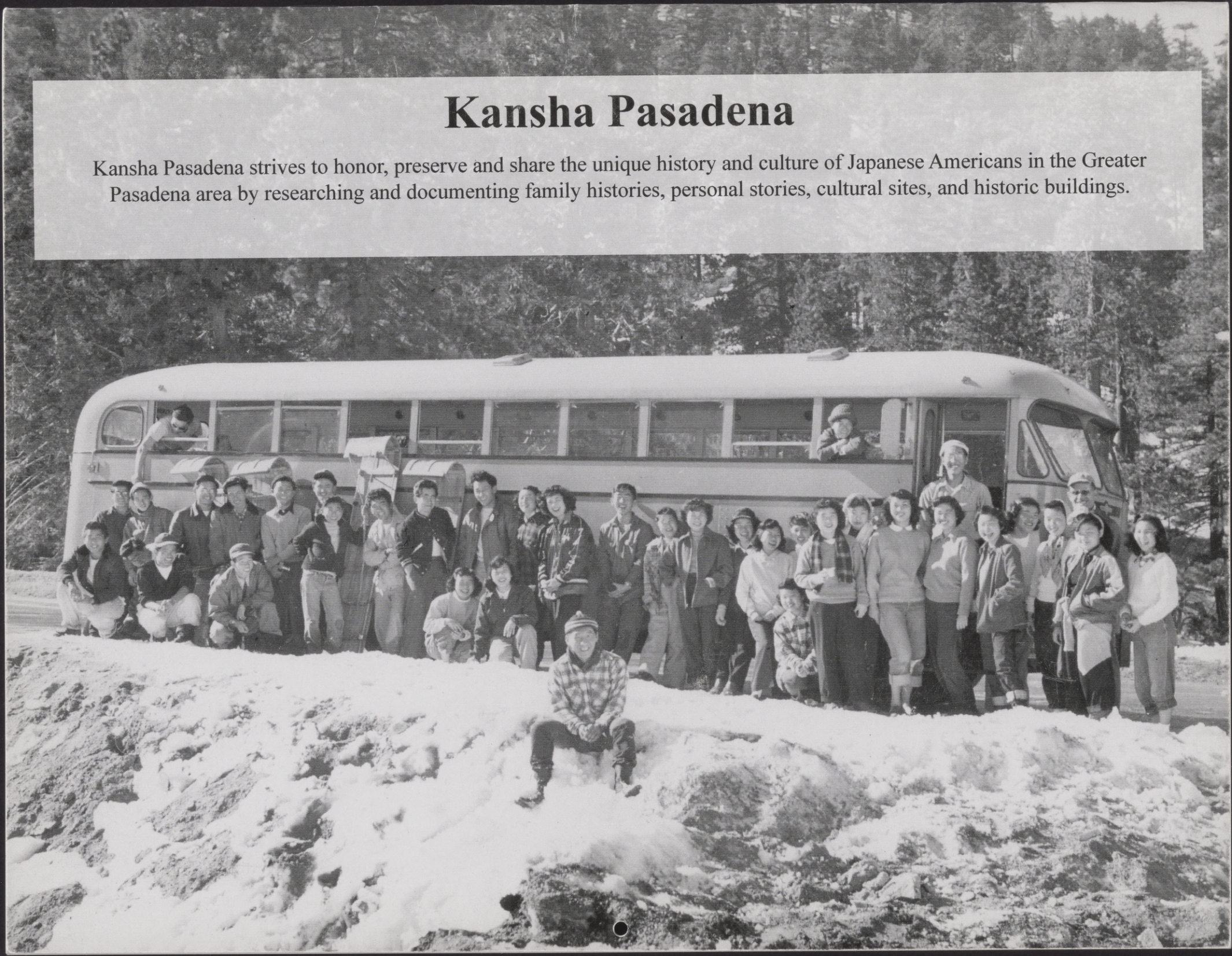
Kansha Pasadena

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